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John Allen Chalk: Personal Correspondence

John Allen Chalk

9-24-1970

From/To: Mrs. Morris C. Bates (Chalk's reply filed first)

Morris C. Bates

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September 24, 1970

Mrs. Morris C. Bates  
305 Birch  
Waco, Texas 76705

Dear Mrs. Bates:

I can appreciate your very deep concern about the matter of mixed marriages. I have never read Foy L. Smith's Things Young People Should Know, therefore, I have no way to evaluate the two lessons mentioned in your letter. However, I would probably have some very serious reservations about the approach brother Smith makes to a subject of mixed marriages. Unfortunately I cannot comment directly to what he says because I have not seen the book.

One must start with the basic Biblical principles in answering the question about mixed marriage. First, there is the doctrine of creation. If we believe Genesis 1 to teach the truth, as we have always said we do, then we believe in the common origin of all men.. We believe that Adam and Eve were real people and from them sprang the entire human race. This means very simply that race is not a Biblical category. It is an invention of later minds. In fact, scientifically as well as Biblically, race is a myth - not a proven concept. Ashley Montagu, the anthropologist at Columbia University, has made it clear in all of the books he has written about the study of man, that the most we can say regarding race is that men are divided into broad gen-o-types, rather than into distinct and clearly marked races. The Bible makes this very clear, not only in creation of Adam and Eve but following the flood with Noah and his sons.

Second, the doctrine of redemption makes it very clear that in Jesus Christ all men again are unified (Galatians 3:26-28). If we have ever taught anything, we have taught that men are once again in Jesus. Evidently we do not mean this as deeply as some of our young people are now beginning to take it. The two people under consideration in the article you read are Christians. They had been counseled with for over a year. All of us involved in the situation did everything we could to discourage the marriage. As Christians living under the will of God, they chose to marry. All we could do as Christians, and as the church of Jesus Christ, was to stand by them, love them, and encourage them once they had made this decision.



The third concern, of course, is the social acceptance and influence that the couple as Christians will have. Unfortunately, deeply prejudiced people use this business of "influence" as a destructive tool. Anything we don't like we say, "if you do that it will destroy your influence." I have heard that argument used with Christian youth time and time again when teachers and preachers did not have substantial, Biblical truths by which to defend their advice. Of course, social pressure has a great deal to do with mixed marriages today. This cannot, however, override the doctrine of creation and the doctrine of redemption, both of which state very clearly that any two persons who are made in the image of God are free to make a choice regarding marrying each other.

C If you have further questions I have not answered, I will be happy to hear from you again. Thank you so much for the very beautiful attitude displayed in your letter. Unfortunately, the article carried in the Christian Journal was carried for the sole purpose of stirring prejudice and reaction against me. I deeply regret that, but was so happy to read your letter and to see shining through it such a beautiful, Christian spirit.

O  
Fraternally yours,

John Allen Chalk

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JAC:lc  
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September 17, 1970

John Allen Chalk  
Highland Church of Christ

Dear Bro. Chalk;

I am writing in regards to an article that I read in "The Christian Journal" Sept. 1970 edition, p.2.

This article stated that you had married a couple--negro man, Henry Leroy Bingham and white girl, Shirley Angela Frazier. I have mixed emotions as to such marriage. Right now I do not agree or disagree. My problem is that I teach "teen-age girls class" on Wednesday night and this was brought up in class with quite a bit of discussion. I would appreciate getting your point of view on this matter.

By the way we are studying "THINGS YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW" by Foy L. Smith. This book was suggested by a Youth Director who is attending Harding Graduate School, in Memphis, Tenn. If you are not familiar with this book you might check the last two lessons--"WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT GETTING MARRIED" and "WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MIXED MARRIAGES". We have not gotten to these lessons; but when the time comes I would like to know a little more, than what I do now, on the subject.

I have taught girls for about 15 years and have been married for 34 years; but I still need to know a lot more.

I would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible on this subject.

With Christian Love,

*Mrs. Morris C. Bates*

Mrs. Morris C. Bates  
305 Birch, Waco, Texas  
76705